he has a difficulty, at every step, of knowing the path which he should take.

## SECT. III.—JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED BY THE CONSCIENCE UPON THE CHARACTER OF MAN.

Much of what we have advanced in last section is hypothetical. On the supposition that the heart is wicked, we have shown how it may be deceitful. We are now to enter upon the proof of its wickedness.

We may come to discover the moral character of man in two ways—first, by bringing the conscience to judge of him; and, secondly, taking with us proper ideas of what moral good is, we may inquire if he possesses it. The first is the method followed in this section. We are to arraign man at the bar of his own conscience.

(1.) It will not be difficult to show that the conscience *condemns certain actions committed by us*. Let the purest man on earth pause, and make his past conduct pass under the cognizance of his conscience, the conscience will at once condemn particular portions of it. In short, the conscience announces to every man that he has sinned.

Now, there is much more implied in this decision than those are aware of who have not reflected on the subject. The conscience has, in the name of God, pronounced its sentence; and the question occurs, How is this sentence to be removed? Conscience declares to every individual that he has sinned, but it points out no way by which the sin may be forgiven. It has solemnly pronounced its sentence; but does it ever lift off the sentence? It condemns at this present time the sin which we committed yesterday; but will it not also condemn the same deed, when submitted to it ten or fifty years hence? Is there any lapse of time, any change of circumstances, which will induce the conscience to revoke its own judgments?

Upon genuine repentance, accompanied with

reparation, is the answer which some will be inclined to give. Every one acquainted with the elements of Christian divinity knows that this view cannot stand investigation. We enter not at present into the 'question, as to whether repentance be in the native power of a being who has once fallen into sin. That remorse